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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Present Conditions in Warsaw/Quantity of Goods on Market/  
Apathetic Attitudes of People/Public Phone Booths/  
Western Influences in Music and Clothes/Theatres

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2. "There are again queues for milk and meat in Warsaw. Possibly this may be due to the fact that there are no facilities for cold storage in Poland. On the other hand there appears to be a considerably larger quantity of all kinds of goods on the market than there was eight months ago [redacted]
3. "The population is apathetic. The majority of those who believed in an early war some months ago appear to have lost this hope. People work much but without any enthusiasm. Very many intellectuals [redacted] have some sort of private occupation in addition to their work at an office or institution. They have learned all sorts of handicrafts and have equipped small workshops at their homes where they weave scarves, make cosmetics, ink, shoes, neckties, sweaters, fountain pens, etc. Officially such activities are forbidden but the authorities pretend to disregard them.
4. "The apathetic attitude of the population finds its reflection in the sinking output of the industries and during the latest CP congress a closed session was held to discuss this subject. As far as is known, it was decided to provide an added stimulus for a small part of the population in the hope that this part will drive the rest to increased efforts. This stimulus is to be an increase of the salaries of the medium officials and technicians who get no premia owing to the character of their work. This tendency appears from the latest rise of the wages of railwaymen. Hitherto, e g, a conductor received 700 zl monthly and a ticket controller 900 zl; now they get 800 zl and 1,200 zl respectively. An analogical phenomenon is the wage rise in the POM (machine and tractor stations) where only the salaries of the instructors, accountants, etc, have been raised while the tractor drivers continue to get the old wage.
5. "In Poland the following coins are in circulation: 10, 20, 50 and 100 groszy

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(iron). Banknotes are of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 1000 zl.

6. "There are a few automatic public telephone booths in Warsaw, and they can always be found at railway stations and bus stations. These automatic telephones date from before World War II and in order to get a connection one has to insert a pre-World War II 20-groszy coin. Such coins can be obtained from a press kiosk or slot near the booth by paying two zlotys. At the offices and ministries [REDACTED] for their long distance calls the ministries use a special catchword which is mentioned to the telephone operator at the telephone office in order to get priority. [REDACTED]
7. "Regarding new trends in Poland, it is very evident that the regime is trying to give the population of Warsaw more entertainment, dancing, etc. The endless meetings, conferences and discussions after working hours at the various places of work have also become less frequent than before. At the dancing palaces and restaurants the bands play practically entirely Western song hits and even pre-World War II melodies. The same is the case with the radio which now gives much light music and considerably fewer propaganda talks.
8. "At the 'Theatre of the Satirists' [REDACTED] a very good show with good sketches and monologues in which the Party and government bureaucracy was sharply criticized. The criticism was even sharper than that one meets in RFE and VOA. What one does not hear, however, is any criticism directed against the Soviets. The show at the 'Theatre of the Satirists' included even two numbers of a purely critical character while the majority of the items did not have any 'political idea' and pursued no propaganda purposes. It appears that the regime propagandists have become convinced that propaganda is more effective when served up in small doses. The theatres are always full, and it is not easy to get tickets.
9. [REDACTED] a new publication, a satirical magazine, issued by the Journalists' Association called 'Prasa Polska'. It was printed in a limited edition of 3,000 copies and meant for 'internal circles' only, but the entire intelligentsia in Warsaw and Krakow read it and laughed.
10. "Some differences in comparison with last year [1953] can also be noted in the displays in the shop windows. It appears that the state-owned clothing industry has given way to the so-called 'Bikiniists', and at present the factories produce shirts, blazers and tight trousers which were considered as decadent US fashion as recently as a year ago. Even in the MHD (Majski Handel Detaliczny) shops, one can find bright ties of the US type.
11. "In Warsaw there are many prostitutes or half-prostitutes, not in the streets but at the restaurants and cafes. There are girls who specialize in foreigners and refuse the invitations of local inhabitants. The price is 200 zl on an average plus 100 zl to the hall porter at the hotel. If paid, the porter does not ask for identity papers, but one may not stay at the hotel longer than two to three hours and never at night but only during the day up to 11 pm when the night porter comes on duty.
12. "The general impression from Warsaw is that the so-called working intelligentsia or middle class has comparatively tolerable living conditions. In any case they do not starve, can send their children to schools, and often keep a servant. The most miserable lot is that of the simple workers who are neither specialists nor Stakhanovites. They have to work like slaves, are dressed poorly in quilted coats of the Soviet type, and are plainly undernourished. The working class plainly takes the last place in the eyes of the regime. One has the impression that the Communists do not regard the workers as a special force as they do the civil servants and even the peasants. Even the political propaganda apparatus, the papers, courses, lectures, meetings, etc, seems to be made for the middle class and not the workers. This fact gives the workers a little more political freedom but less bread."

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